

RADIO PROPAGANDA REPORT

WORLD COMMENT ANTICIPATING BIG-FOUR TALKS

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The official announcement from Vienna that the four Foreign Ministers had reached agreement on the purpose and procedures of a heads-of-state conference drew considerably less attention than the announcement of the impending Soviet-Yugoslav talks, the conclusion of the Austrian treaty, and the Warsaw conference.

Britain: There is little press comment on the possible outcome of four-power talks. A London TIMES editorial on 17 May suggests that the heads of government consider an end to the "broadcast propaganda war," because it "will not make much sense if the nations state that they are acting for peace and yet continue acting for war." The 15 May SUNDAY OBSERVER comments optimistically that Soviet moves on disarmament and Austria and overtures toward Yugoslavia suggest a genuine desire to "loosen up the situation which the cold war has frozen into rigidity," and a London radio commentator amplifies a similar statement by attributing the modification of Soviet policy to increased Western strength, the need to reduce the economic burden of the cold war, and a desire to create a neutral zone, including Yugoslavia, in Europe. "For the first time in years," the OBSERVER says, "the coming conference may offer an opportunity for real progress toward a settlement in Europe." It concludes that the "true scope for fruitful negotiation, and for progress in stages, lies in the large intermediate range between a maximum program involving a total reversal of the postwar partition in Europe and a minimum program confined to limitation of armaments and a modus vivendi based on the status quo."

Prior to the announcement of the Big-Four agreement, British papers on 13 May pictured developments in East-West relations, particularly the Austrian treaty, in optimistic terms. The DAILY MIRROR observed that although new differences might arise out of a meeting of Eisenhower, Bulganin, "and either Attlee or Eden," at least they would "grow out of a fresh start and not out of the sour soil of the past." The Conservative DAILY MAIL perceived "some substance" in the recent indications of a trend toward lasting peace, and the Labor DAILY HERALD saw as the statesmen's task a further narrowing of the already shrinking cleavage between East and West. Referring to Eden's campaign statement at Nottingham to the effect that Big-Four talks might be forthcoming, REUTERS predicted that an announced date for summit talks could clinch the general election for the Conservatives.

France: Broadcasts publicize the agreement in Vienna and subsequent statements by the four Foreign Ministers, including Pinay's comment in Copenhagen that there is a "real basis for optimism" and that the atmosphere is "far less tense than before." The signing of the Austrian treaty and the plans for the Big-Four meeting are hailed in most comment as initial steps toward peace. The French press echoes British speculation that the desire to create a neutralized area in Europe underlay the USSR's recent diplomatic moves, including agreement to Big-Four talks. Although some papers express skepticism over the possibility of tangible results from a heads-of-state meeting, all agree that Soviet intentions must be explored and that the initiative must not be left entirely to the Russians. LIBERATION asks if France and the West are going to continue trying to impose West German rearmament at all costs and to "doom to failure" the coming Big-Four talks; FIGARO declares that the West, in negotiating, must "make concessions as well as demands" while remaining unyielding on the condition of free elections for German unification.

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WORLD COMMENT ANTICIPATING BIG-FOUR TALKSSummary

1. Non-Communist Reaction

Although overshadowed by more immediate international developments, the agreement to a Big-Four conference is hailed widely and with considerable optimism in most countries outside the Sino-Soviet Bloc. Coming on the heels of Soviet concessions on the Austrian treaty, it is generally regarded as the beginning of a thaw in the cold war and an opportunity for real progress toward an international settlement. Reserve and sometimes skepticism about any substantial results from the meeting are most frequently expressed in comment from Australia, Japan, South Vietnam and Turkey.

The Soviet agreement to meet with Western leaders is coupled with the announced Bulganin-Khrushchev journey to Belgrade and the Austrian treaty as evidence that the USSR wants to build a buffer zone of neutral states against the strengthened West. Rightist papers show some anxiety that the West may "fall for" this scheme.

Disarmament and the German question are the issues most prominently cited as presumed topics for discussion. In view of the new Soviet proposals, progress on disarmament is considered the more likely of achievement and is sometimes called a prerequisite for any German settlement. Particularly in West Germany, editorial opinion is pessimistic about a satisfactory solution of the German problem and fearful of an unsatisfactory one.

2. Communist Comment

Although Moscow gave worldwide publicity to the Vienna announcement on agreement to talks, Soviet propaganda reflects an evident effort to weaken the impact of the Western initiative by attributing it to popular pressure or to anxiety about the Bloc solidarity cemented at the Warsaw Conference. Exploitation of the USSR's disarmament proposals seems also designed in part to counteract any propaganda advantage gained by the West. Khrushchev's omission in his 18 May Moscow speech of any reference to Big-Power talks while discussing disarmament and the Austrian treaty reinforces indications that the conference will continue to be played down pending an official Soviet reply to the Western note and consequent restoration of some measure of initiative to the USSR. Moscow has at no time spelled out a proposed agenda for Big-Power talks, but elite speeches and propaganda have frequently juxtaposed references to the German question and disarmament with statements about negotiations. There has been no comment from Peking and little from the European Satellites.

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Prior to the Vienna Foreign Ministers' meeting, the French press was "hopeful for the prospects" of a Big-Four meeting, with L'AUREOLE calling the success of such a conference "dependent entirely on the Russians." LA DEPECHE DU MIDI saw President Eisenhower's statements on a Big-Four conference and the Soviet disarmament proposals as evidence of an "apparent detente" between East and West, and LE PARISIEN LIBERE, noting the progress being made toward Big-Four talks, pointed to the "anxiety" Communist China causes the USSR as a new element affecting East-West relations.

West Germany: Principal discussion of the top-level conference was on 11 and 12 May, when nearly the entire West German press carried reports and editorials on the subject. News of the Soviet agreement to a meeting, which had been taken for granted by the press, was generally overshadowed by coverage of the Austrian treaty signing and the Rhineland-Palatinate Landtag elections. There is no editorial comment on the Foreign Ministers' statement concerning Big-Four talks.

All papers had welcomed the Western proposal as a step toward relieving world tension, although most editorialists were pessimistic regarding the possibility of progress toward a solution of the German problem. A number of SPD papers expressed apprehension that the Big Powers might conclude an agreement at the expense of continued German partition. The pro-Government press, noting with satisfaction that the West had taken the initiative to end the cold war, called the Western note "the best proposal ever made regarding East-West controversies": DIE WELT expressed the view that "the extensive peace offensive of the West" has begun; WESTDEUTSCHE RUNDSCHAU interpreted the note as heralding a Western "flexible policy"; and BRAUNSCHWEIGER ZEITUNG, observing that "even the United States" had given up its aversion to top-level talks, expressed confidence that the conference would bring about a relaxation of international tension.

The press generally considered the problem of German reunification as tied up with European security, and some papers urged the Federal Government to submit detailed proposals to the conference for solution of the German question. Speculation on Moscow's stand at the conference included predictions that the Soviets would demand German neutrality as the price for reunification and suggestions that the conference would achieve results only if German partition is considered more dangerous to world peace than German unity. But it was conceded that Germany was unlikely to be the major topic of the conference, which would probably give priority to broader questions of disarmament and security, and some positive results were predicted in the more generalized spheres. NEUE RHINE-ZEITUNG (Socialist) thought there would be no other possibilities left for obtaining peace if talks on the highest level were to fail. TELEGRAF believed that with the establishment of the "East Bloc NATO" Moscow would have something to barter in exchange for the Federal Republic's renunciation of NATO membership.

From 9 through 17 May, West German radios did not comment specifically on a Four-Power conference, mentioning it only in passing in comment on German reunification. The Baden-Baden radio on one occasion remarked that "the most important point at the moment is to find out whether Moscow wants to grant a future reunified Germany the same freedom of decision in the field of foreign affairs as is conceded by the Western Powers under the Paris Agreements."

Austria: Only about one-third of the non-Communist papers, preoccupied with the Austrian settlement, report the Foreign Ministers' agreement on convening a conference. Noting the reported Western rejection of a suggestion by Molotov that Vienna be selected as the site for the talks, several papers express

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the belief that the Western representatives were anxious to avoid creating even the slightest impression that Austria could serve as an example for settlement of the German question. The fact that Molotov, in indicating acceptance of the Western invitation, did not insist on or even suggest Communist China's participation is given special emphasis.

The independent DIE PRESSE, predicting that the agenda of the top-level talks will include disarmament, the establishment of a regional security system, and the revival of East-West trade, quotes Western sources as emphasizing that immediate results are not expected from the meetings. The People's Party SUEDEPOST (Graz) editorializes that the West is somewhat uneasy over the prospect of introducing talks on the settlement of the German problem at a Big-Four meeting. Pointing out many indications, including the reversal of Moscow's policy on Austria, which justify the hope that the present moment is favorable for East-West talks, the paper declares that the settlement of the Austrian question ought to demonstrate that compromises are possible in other fields as well.

Radio coverage of the agreement to hold the conference was restricted to a few brief reports.

Italy: Rome broadcasts report the Vienna announcement with little comment; one newscaster welcomes the accord but warns that "we must not expect miracles." IL MESSAGGERO (15 May) relates the four-power conference to the Soviet-Yugoslav talks, which "should lead the way to open Soviet patronage of what is being popularly called a 'neutrality and demilitarization belt' from Helsinki to New Delhi via Vienna and Belgrade." Elaborating on the "neutral belt" concept, IL MESSAGGERO dismisses the idea that the Western Powers will "fall for it" and adds that the top-level conference is being arranged "in order to reach agreement on armament control, not to allow the democratic and free countries of the West to end up at the mercy of so-called neutrality." In an editorial on the following day the paper declares: "We look with great anxiety and greater hope to the future four-power conference since the conclusion of the Vienna treaty. The whole world expects that a decisive phase of security and peace has begun at Vienna." IL QUOTIDIANO calls it obvious that the Soviet Union wants talks with Tito because the USSR "intends to appear at the four-power conference with the largest possible number of trump cards in its hands--success at Vienna, at Belgrade, and so on."

Sweden: Skepticism regarding the prospects of successful Big-Power talks gives way to optimistic comment following the Vienna announcement. Early this month, the Conservative SYDSVENSKA DAGBLADET had declared that the "Western powers are probably not expecting too much from a top-level conference" since the USSR has not altered the "fundamental assumptions" of its foreign policy, and the Conservative KVALLS POSTEN had predicted that high-level talks on Germany would be "fruitless unless the Soviet Union is prepared to permit free general elections throughout the country." The Liberal DAGENS NYHETER commented that with the Russians "having their hands full on the home front," there is reason to be confident about the outcome of such talks, although the Soviet Union would not be likely to make concessions on Germany similar to those on Austria. The Social Democratic MORGON TIDNINGEN viewed the Soviet disarmament proposals as a basis for top-level negotiations: "in addition to propaganda," the paper said, the proposals contain "suggestions which the West cannot refuse to discuss."

The signing of the Austrian treaty and the Big-Four agreement elicit STOCKHOLMS TIDNINGEN's comment that the cold war is "beginning to thaw" and SVENSKA DAGBLADET's optimistic suggestion that the Austrian success may represent the beginning of a trend toward peace which will culminate at the four-power conference.

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Switzerland: Berne broadcasts report press comment welcoming the plans for a conference, although NEUE ZUERCHER ZEITUNG expresses the view that the political future of Europe and the world may be more strongly influenced by the Austrian treaty than by top-level talks. The Socialist BERNER TAGWACHT declares that Germany's entry into NATO "could have been a reason for mourning if the West had not taken steps for a Big-Four conference at the same time."

Spain and Portugal: Local radios report the Vienna announcement without comment, and MADRID and PUEBLO are the only papers to discuss it. Both define the Soviet goal as neutralization of Germany at the Big-Four meeting and neutralization of Yugoslavia at the Soviet-Yugoslav talks in Belgrade.

B. Yugoslavia

News coverage by Yugoslav radios of the negotiations leading up to the agreement on a Four-Power conference was very heavy, and the Vienna announcement, although overshadowed by rejoicing over the prospective Yugoslav-Soviet talks, is greeted with optimistic gratification. The Belgrade radio sees the agreement as indicating "signs of an improvement in international relations" and "to a certain extent a new situation marked by efforts to approach burning problems in a different manner and adopt wiser methods for their solution." BORBA (16 May) is "confident that such a conference can yield important results," citing in particular the German question and disarmament as issues whose solution would be a mighty contribution to peace. The coming conference is listed with the Austrian treaty as among several indications of a tendency toward "active international coexistence" manifest in different parts of the world.

C. The Far East, South Asia and Australasia

Comment is fairly extensive in Japan, South Vietnam, India and Australia, but sparse in other countries. The Japanese, while welcoming the USSR's agreement to participate in top-level talks, express pessimism about the prospects of such a meeting; the Indian press considers the time ripe for a conference and believes it might be beneficial; Australian newspapers view the talks as the best possible opportunity to test "Soviet sincerity"; and the Chinese press in Saigon-Cholon warns the West to be wary of a "Soviet trap." The Karachi and Seoul radios follow the negotiations closely but have not commented.

Japan: Most commentators, while welcoming Soviet agreement to a conference, anticipate basic disagreement over such issues as disarmament and German unification. ASAHI, reporting the initial reaction of Japanese political and financial circles to the Vienna announcement, sees unanimous agreement that "a great stride toward relaxation of world tension" has been taken and notes that "while these sources do not expect much from the conference, the Socialist and labor groups expect progress toward achieving peaceful coexistence." The paper editorializes that with Soviet agreement, "the impression is given that East-West tension, at least in Europe, is being eased considerably." It discerns a change in the Soviet attitude, with the Austrian question as a turning point: although recent Soviet moves, it says, "must be carefully studied, the fact that Russia has agreed to a Big-Four meeting shows that a new Russian foreign policy is being evolved" in order "to prevent the Russian sphere of influence from being directly threatened by the NATO forces," and for this purpose "Russia is apparently trying to build as large a neutral zone as possible between her sphere and the Paris Treaty nations."

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MAINICHI comments in a similar vein: "The Big-Four meeting on the highest level will be held against the background of the Paris Agreements and the Austrian treaty of independence. Can the two defense structures in Europe be adjusted? What of the neutral zone between the two?" The NIPPON TIMES holds out little hope for the conference because of the basic aims of Soviet foreign policy, pointing out that "we are compelled to ask if the plan of Communist world domination is to continue. That is the real crux." SANGYO KEIZAI notes Western hopes for "unification of an independent Germany, international control of hydrogen and atomic bombs and conventional disarmament, U.N. membership for free-world countries still left out, and easing of tension in the Formosa Strait," and predicts that the Soviet Union will demand "abolition of such alliances as NATO and SEATO, U.N. membership for Communist China, and the banning of atomic weapons."

Radio Tokyo commentators voice anxiety about Communist military strength in Eastern Europe and echo the newspaper editorials in stressing Soviet efforts to establish a neutral zone along the Satellite borders.

South Vietnam: Most of the Saigon Vietnamese-language press reports the Vienna announcement factually, but extensive comment in the more internationally oriented Chinese-language press of Cholon predicts that the conference will not produce concrete results and may result in "another Yalta," with weak countries being sacrificed for the sake of temporary peace. SUN WUN JIH PAO says that if the conference "really opens," it will be "a diplomatic triumph of appeasement" for England and France; "the Americans, in order to strengthen bonds of the allied nations as well as to maintain the political influence of the British Conservative Party at home, have finally given in and called for a conference." Expressing fear that the "naive Americans" may fall into a Soviet trap, the paper declares that "having experienced in the past many lessons from Russia, it is foolish for the Americans to accept again this so-called Big-Four conference." AH CHAU JIH PAO comments that the conference seems designed to help Eden's Conservative Party win an electoral victory as well as to reduce world tension. Predicting that the problems of Germany, Korea, Vietnam and China will be discussed, the paper warns that "nothing can be achieved in view of the wide differences of opinions and interests of the participating nations. Unless the Americans yield to Soviet demands, which Roosevelt did at the Yalta Conference, nothing will come out of the conference." It concludes that if the Americans "follow the footsteps of England in this conference, then it will be the last day for the Nationalist Chinese on Taiwan." YUAN TUNG JIH PAC hopes that the United States will "stand firm" and not be tricked by the Soviets.

Australia: The SYDNEY MORNING HERALD points to the still unanswered "basic question" of whether the USSR genuinely desires a peaceful settlement with the West or is "solely interested in the weakening of the democratic position in Europe." Calling the coming Big-Four talks the best possible opportunity for testing Soviet sincerity, the paper adds that "there is reason to be hopeful if, as Mr. Dulles has said, there are signs that Russian policy may be moving toward peace." The MELBOURNE HERALD speculates that the sudden switch in Soviet policy on Austria may be applied to the German case when the four powers meet, but "at a price." The editorial says that the Austrian treaty seems to presage a Soviet offer to create a free, reunited Germany if the West German alliance with NATO is dropped, and that such terms--implying the scrapping of the West's defense system--can hardly inspire confidence "unless genuine disarmament comes first."

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II. Communist CommentA. Moscow

Moscow broadcast worldwide on 15 May the Big-Four Foreign Ministers' announcement on agreement to a heads-of-state conference, but has not devoted a full commentary or editorial to it to date. Molotov's 15 May statement in Vienna on the four powers' "positive" attitude toward the conference followed Bulganin's assertion in his 11 May Warsaw Conference speech that the Soviet Government "regards positively" the idea of a Great-Power conference and will study the Western note carefully.

Depreciation of the Western Initiative: In an apparent effort to weaken the impact of the Western initiative, Moscow broadcast twice to the home audience on 14 May a dispatch from PRAVDA's Warsaw correspondents declaring that "it is not by chance" that Western leaders' bids for Big-Power talks coincided with the Warsaw Conference. Evidently with the same purpose, propaganda portrays the Western move as resulting from popular pressure: Bulganin's remark in Warsaw that recent talk about a Big-Power parley in the United States, Britain and France is not fortuitous, since "the idea of such a conference has grown deep roots among the masses," is echoed editorially in IZVESTIA on 13 May and in other comment making frequent reference to mass support for a conference.

TASS' initial brief dispatch on Secretary Dulles' television report singles out his comment that the Soviet stand on the Austrian question was unexpected by the United States, his admonition that a Big-Power meeting holds "danger as well as opportunities," and his suggestion of a "limited scope" for the talks; another report notes President Eisenhower's press conference statement on the need for proceeding "cautiously no matter what hopes there are."

Disarmament Proposal: Exploitation of the Soviet disarmament plan, released four days before the Vienna announcement, seems also designed in part to counteract any propaganda advantage the West may have gained from its initiative on Big-Power talks. Bulganin in Warsaw and Molotov in Vienna juxtapose their statements on the projected conference with references to the disarmament plan, and publicity is given President Eisenhower's press conference statement that he "presumed the problem of disarmament should be discussed for easing international tensions." Khrushchev's 18 May industrial conference speech in the Kremlin, as reported by TASS, uses the disarmament proposals as a principal illustration of the Soviet foreign policy based on the "possibility and indispensability of peaceful coexistence." Khrushchev's omission of any reference to Big-Power talks in a speech discussing disarmament, the Austrian treaty, and the impending Soviet-Yugoslav talks reinforces the indications in routine comment that the subject of the Big-Four conference will continue to be underplayed in propaganda pending the issuance of an official reply to the Western note and the consequent restoration of some measure of initiative to the USSR.

The German Question: Although the propaganda has at no time spelled out the questions the Soviet Government would want discussed at the four-power conference, the subject of Germany has--like disarmament--been juxtaposed frequently with that of negotiations. Thus Bulganin's 11 May speech, after stating the Soviet Government's attitude toward a Big-Power conference, goes on to say that the USSR "has stressed the importance of settling the question of Germany's reunification through negotiations among the four powers with participation of representatives from the two sections of Germany." And Molotov's speech in Vienna, before noting the Foreign Ministers' agreement to a conference, says that "the Soviet Union will continue to strive to find ways for a peaceful and democratic settlement of the German issue."

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India: The Indian press by and large agrees that the time is ripe for a conference and that it might be beneficial. AMRITA BAZAR PATRIKA suggests that the talks may have a "beneficial effect" on the British elections.

Nationalist China: High Chinese Nationalist sources in Taipei are reported concerned about a possible Russian offer of German reunification at "a high price" and worried "lest in a sense of false security the West will meet halfway the Russian demand for legalizing the Communist fruits of aggression by maintaining the status quo with China."

D. The Near and Middle East

Newscasts report Soviet acceptance of a Big-Four meeting prominently but devote considerably more attention to the signing of the Austrian treaty. There is little editorial discussion. Turkish press comment prior to the Vienna announcement was particularly pessimistic concerning high-level talks.

Egypt: Commenting that the results of the meeting will depend on whether or not a common basis can be found for discussion of the German question, the Cairo radio says that "agreement on disarmament and a ban on the use of atomic and hydrogen weapons could lead indirectly to settlement of the German question itself, since it would stop the arms race and restrict the rearmament of Germany."

Turkey: Prior to the announcement of the Foreign Ministers' agreement, MILLIYET forecast pessimistically that "as soon as the Russians sit down at the conference table they will ask for cancellation of the Paris Agreements. If this is the case the conference will end soon after it begins." HURRIYET's political observer said on the same day that the conference "could not possibly begin in an atmosphere of cordiality."

Israel: The Israeli press and radio give prominent play to news agency reports on the coming conference. HATZOFE calls the Soviet leaders' decision to visit Belgrade "a good omen for the coming top-level talks."

E. Latin America

Newscasts report the Vienna announcement of agreement on Big-Four talks and Dulles' returning statement. So far no comment has been monitored.

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In his statement on leaving Vienna, Molotov declared--without mentioning Germany--that "it only remains to wish that the agreement reached here on one of the most urgent questions would serve as an example to all in other important affairs." Statements drawing a specific parallel between Austria and Germany, however, are confined largely to German-language broadcasts. In a typical commentary, Timofeyev tells German listeners on 17 May that the Austrian example has brought home to every German the fact that international disputes can only be solved by negotiations, and that the renunciation of West Germany's participation in military blocs would "also pave the way for the successful solution of the German problem"; he does not mention the heads-of-state conference.

The Soviet View of Negotiations: Current broadcasts include repeated reiterations that the Soviet Government is working for the relaxation of international tensions and that negotiations can be successful given mutual good will; but no recent speech by a top Soviet leader has used the unqualified formula introduced by Malenkov in March 1953 that the USSR bases its policy on the presumption that "there is no international disputed question" which cannot be solved by negotiations. In his May Day speech and PRAVDA article on the V-E anniversary Zhukov characterized Soviet foreign policy as "aimed at solving controversial international questions by peaceful means," and Bulganin on 11 May said the Soviet Government "is firmly convinced that providing there is good will on the part of the states bearing the main responsibility for the preservation of peace, it will be possible to settle a number of important problems at present hindering relaxation of international tension"; PRAVDA's 13 May editorial also refers to the special responsibility of the Great Powers.

On the other hand, the Malenkov line was closely approximated in a Home Service broadcast on the V-E anniversary by General V. V. Kurasov, who said that "the Soviet people and their government justly consider that there exist no controversial or unsettled questions which cannot be settled by peaceful means." Korneichuk's report to the Fifth All-Union Peace Congress in Moscow similarly asserts the Peace Partisans' belief that "there are no questions at issue between the United States and the Soviet Union which could not be solved by good will and peaceful means."

B. Peking and the Satellites

The conference is mentioned only incidentally in propaganda from East Berlin and the other European Satellites, which publicize the Austrian treaty, the Warsaw Conference and the Soviet disarmament proposals extensively. When mentioned at all, the Big-Four talks are treated as forced on the Western governments by pressure of public opinion and are characterized as a "victory for the Soviet thesis that only direct talks between the responsible leaders" can bring a peaceful settlement (Warsaw) or as an opportunity, "as the Soviet Union constantly makes clear," for agreement by negotiation (Prague).

Peking newscasts reported the Dulles-MacMillan-Pinay consultations in Paris and quoted TASS on U.S. popular demands for a high-level parley, but there has been no Chinese Communist comment.

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